

**Comment Response Document
Regarding the Water Quality Analysis of Eutrophication for St. Mary's Lake
County, MD**

Introduction

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has conducted a public review of the proposed Water Quality Analysis (WQA) of eutrophication for St. Mary's Lake. The public comment period was open from November 8, 2002 to December 7, 2002. MDE received two sets of written comments.

Below is a list of commentors, their affiliation, the date comments were submitted, and the numbered references to the comments submitted. In the pages that follow, comments are summarized and listed with MDE's response.

List of Commentors

Author	Affiliation	Date	Comment Number
Bob Boxwell	Lower Potomac Tributary Team	November 14, 2002	1
John J. Groeger, P.E.	St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation	November 21, 2002	2

Comments and Responses

1. The commentor agreed with the use of a 20 µg/l chlorophyll standard, provided that the lake is not considered as a drinking water source. The commentor questioned whether a recent study concerning the aquifers and water demand in southern Maryland was consulted to determine whether St. Mary's Lake is considered a future or back-up drinking water supply.

Response:

MDE recognizes the importance of preserving drinking water sources. Generally, impoundments used for water supply (Designated Uses I-P, III-P or IV-P) are managed at a lower trophic state, corresponding to a standard of about 10 µg/l of chlorophyll *a*. St. Mary's lake has a designated use of I (preservation of aquatic life), for which MDE believes that a standard of 20 µg/l for chlorophyll *a* is sufficiently stringent.

St. Mary's lake is currently not considered a potential source for drinking water. Should this change, through a process including the change of the lake's Designated Use, MDE would review, and if necessary revise, the chlorophyll *a* standard.

The study to which the commentor refers examines the drinking water potential of the Patapsco aquifer, which is at a depth of about 400 feet (datum = sea level) in this area and is

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not recharged by St. Mary's Lake. The uppermost aquifer in this area, the Piney Point/Nanjemoy, is at a depth of about 100 feet in this area, and also receives no recharge from St. Mary's Lake (Maryland Geological Survey, 2002).

2. The commentor suggested that coordination of this action include the St. Mary's County Department of Planning and Zoning, as that Department traditionally reviews such matters.

Response: MDE coordinates TMDLs with the local government(s) in the watershed of interest via the designated local government contact. For St. Mary's County, the designated local government contact is Mr. George Erichsen, Director of St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation.

Reference:

Maryland Geological Survey, 2002. Hydrogeology and Hydrology Program. Southern Maryland Project: Background information. <http://www.mgs.md.gov/hydro/somdbgrd.htm>.